

American English Resources for Virtual or Face-to-face Grammar Instruction

In this webinar, we will:

- explore several of the free, engaging resources available on the American English website, such as *Create to Communicate: Art Activities for the EFL Classroom*, *Activate - Games for Learning American English*, *American Teens Talk!* interview texts and videos, and the *Sing Out Loud* music collection
- examine fun, practical options for using and adapting these resources to teach grammar topics in a variety of ELT contexts and levels



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



Ellana Black



Ellana is a Program Officer at FHI 360, supporting the Online Professional English Network (OPEN). She began teaching in 2013 and is a former Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (2014-15). She has also held administrative and student support positions at several universities in the United States.

Ellana has an MA in TESL and is currently pursuing her PhD in Education at Drexel University. Her research interests include Mind, Brain, and Education Science, teacher training and professional development, and program development and leadership.



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American English Resources for Virtual or Face-to-face Grammar Instruction



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**What challenges do you face with
teaching grammar?**





Making it
exciting

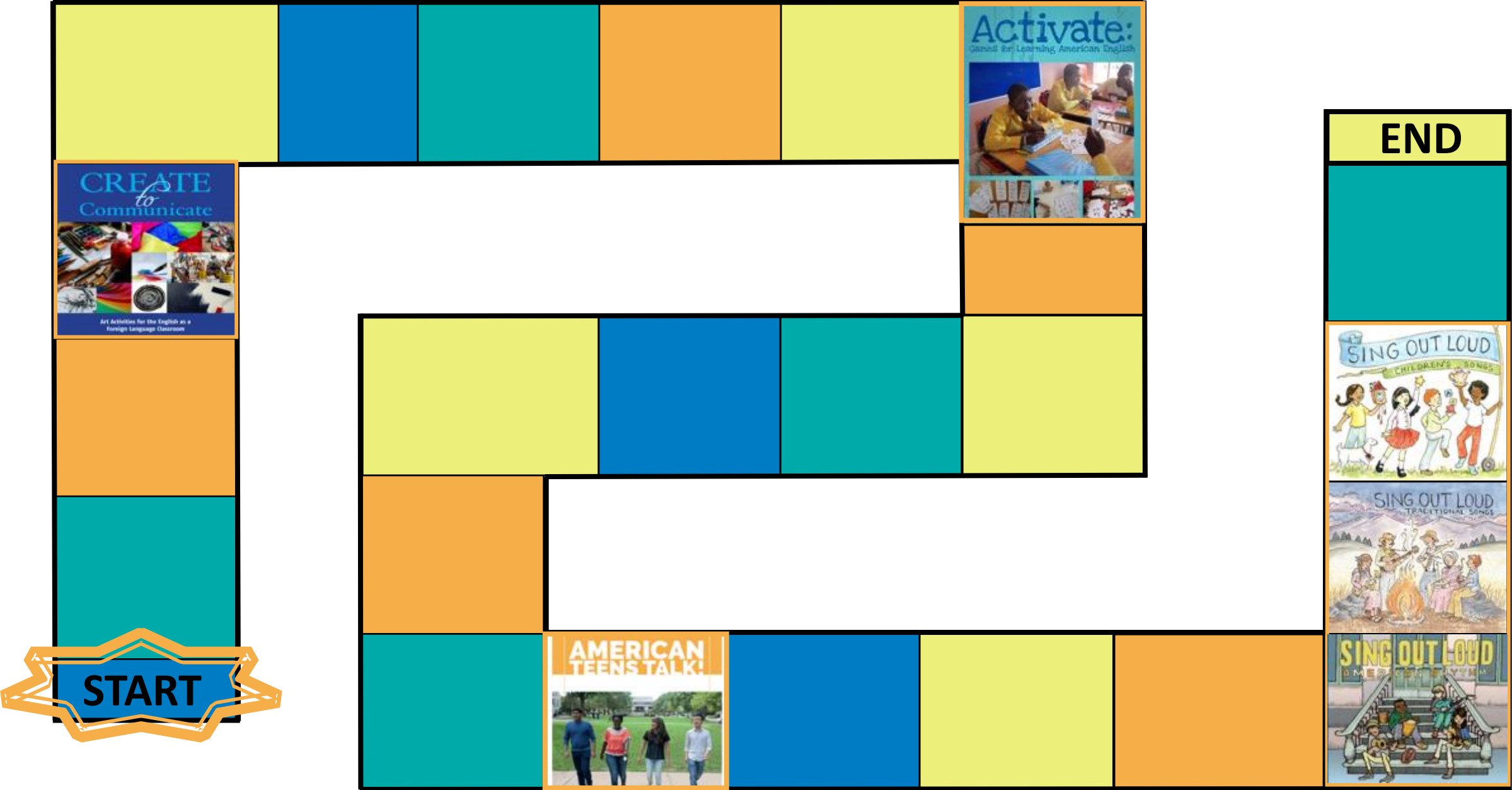
Integrating
skills

Finding
authentic
materials

Student
motivation

Creating
fun activities

Webinar Plan





<https://americanenglish.state.gov>



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ENGAGING ENGLISH LEARNERS WITH NEW OF LITERACY

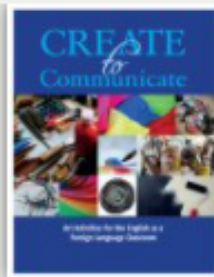
[Teaching the Four Skills](#)[U.S. Culture, Music & Games](#)[Webinars](#)[Massive Open Online Courses \(MOOCs\)](#)[Other Resources](#)[English Club Texts and Materials](#)[Teacher's Corner](#)[Comics for Language Learning](#)[Online Professional English Network \(OPEN\)](#)

Teacher's Corner

Teacher's Corner, we look at several new messaging, comics and graphic novels, and podcasting.

WORD SEARCHES
READING & WRITING

ENGLISH TEACHING



Create to Communicate: Art Activities for the EFL Classroom

Looking for ways to add art activities to your English language classroom? Create to Communicate is filled with great activities and lessons that use art to foster English language development.

This book is intended for English language teachers who would like to reap the benefits that the visual arts provide, but are unsure of where or how to begin. By providing language objectives matched with art ideas and guidelines, this book seeks to use the arts as a tool to build and strengthen English reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills and develop the confidence students need to take risks and explore within a new language. Designed to supplement regular coursework, the purpose of this book is not to provide art lessons, but rather to provide ideas of how to incorporate the arts into the language classroom to make English accessible and understandable to students. This book is ideal for Access English Microscholarship Teachers, primary and secondary school EFL teachers worldwide, American Spaces, English language tutors, and English Teaching Assistants (Fulbright).


Downloads

Hard Copy

Downloadable PDF

 [Text \(PDF\)](#)

Create to Communicate

 [Word \(DOCX\)](#)

CREATE *to* Communicate



Art Activities for the English as a
Foreign Language Classroom

Create to Communicate: Art Activities for the EFL Classroom

- Drawing
- Collage
- Sculpture
- Mixed media

Dioramas

Three-dimensional pictures or scenes; can be made from a wide variety of materials.



Possible materials:

- Empty boxes
- Paint or colored paper
- Glue
- Magazines and/or pictures
- Small personal items or toys

Daily Routines Show and Tell

Use dioramas to have students share their daily routines.

- Works for students of all ages.
- Introductory activity for the start of the term.
- Great practice with the grammar and vocabulary used to discuss routine activities.

**What grammar forms or common words
and phrases are used to express routine
or habitual activities?**



Activity Instructions

Instructions:

1. Students keep a log of their daily activities using past tense verbs.

Example: *I woke up and brushed my teeth.*

2. Review activity logs and past tense verb use.



Activity Log - Monday

7:00 am	I woke up and brushed my teeth.	3:30 pm	I helped my father stock the shelves in his store.
7:30 am	I ate breakfast with my mother, brother, and sister.	4:00 pm	I went home.
8:00 am	I walked to school with my brother and sister.	4:30 pm	I ate a snack with my brother.
8:30 am	I went to school.	5:00 pm	I did my math and science homework.
11:30 am	I went outside to recess and played soccer with my friends.	7:00 pm	I ate dinner with my family.
12:00 pm	I ate lunch.	7:45 pm	I played outside with my sister.
12:20 pm	I went to English class and science class.	8:30 pm	I took a bath.
3:00 pm	I left school.	9:00 pm	I read my book and then went to sleep.

Identifying Routine Activities

Instructions:

3. Have students review their own log to identify routine activities.

Monday

7:00 am	I woke up and brushed my teeth.	3:30 pm	I helped my father stock the shelves in his store.
7:30 am	I ate breakfast with my mother, brother, and sister.	4:00 pm	I went home.
8:00 am	I walked to school with my brother and sister.	4:30 pm	I ate a snack with my brother.
8:30 am	I went to school.	5:00 pm	I did my math and science homework.
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12:00 pm	I ate lunch.	7:45 pm	I played outside with my sister.
12:20 pm	I went to English class and science class.	8:30 pm	I took a bath.
3:00 pm	I left school.	9:00 pm	I read my book and then went to sleep.

Tuesday

7:00 am	I woke up and brushed my teeth.	3:30 pm	I helped my father stock the shelves in his store.
7:30 am	I ate breakfast with my mother, brother, and sister.	4:00 pm	I went home.
8:00 am	I walked to school with my brother and sister.	4:30 pm	I ate a snack with my brother.
8:30 am	I went to school.	5:00 pm	I did my math and science homework.
11:30 am	I went outside to recess and played soccer with my friends.	7:00 pm	I ate dinner with my family.
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12:20 pm	I went to English class and science class.	8:30 pm	I took a bath.
3:00 pm	I left school.	9:00 pm	I read my book and then went to sleep.

Wednesday

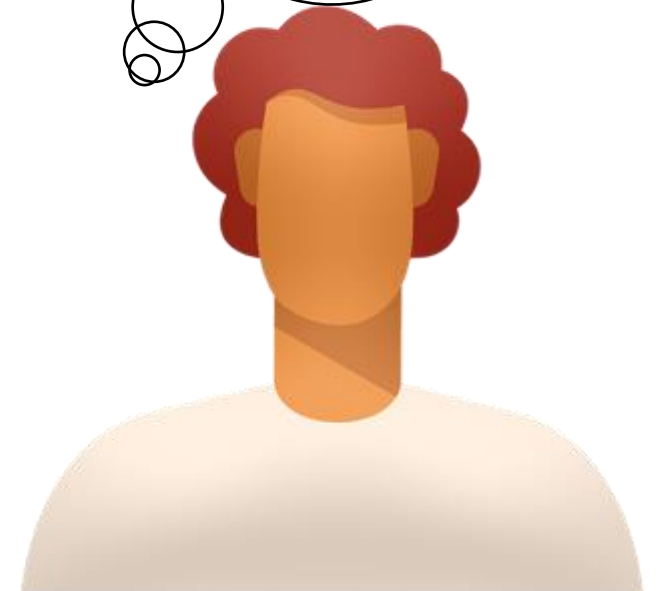
7:00 am	I woke up and brushed my teeth.	3:30 pm	I helped my father stock the shelves in his store.
7:30 am	I ate breakfast with my mother, brother, and sister.	4:00 pm	I went home.
8:00 am	I walked to school with my brother and sister.	4:30 pm	I ate a snack with my brother.
8:30 am	I went to school.	5:00 pm	I did my math and science homework.
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Thursday

7:00 am	I woke up and brushed my teeth.	3:30 pm	I helped my father stock the shelves in his store.
7:30 am	I ate breakfast with my mother, brother, and sister.	4:00 pm	I went home.
8:00 am	I walked to school with my brother and sister.	4:30 pm	I ate a snack with my brother.
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12:20 pm	I went to English class and science class.	8:30 pm	I took a bath.
3:00 pm	I left school.	9:00 pm	I read my book and then went to sleep.

I played soccer at recess with my friends.

I read a book every night before bed.



Identifying Routine Activities

Instructions:

4. Review the simple present and common words for talking about routine activities.

Monday

7:00 am	I woke up and brushed my teeth.	3:30 pm	I helped my father stock the shelves in his store.
7:30 am	I ate breakfast with my mother, brother, and sister.	4:00 pm	I went home.
8:00 am	I walked to school with my brother and sister.	4:30 pm	I ate a snack with my brother.
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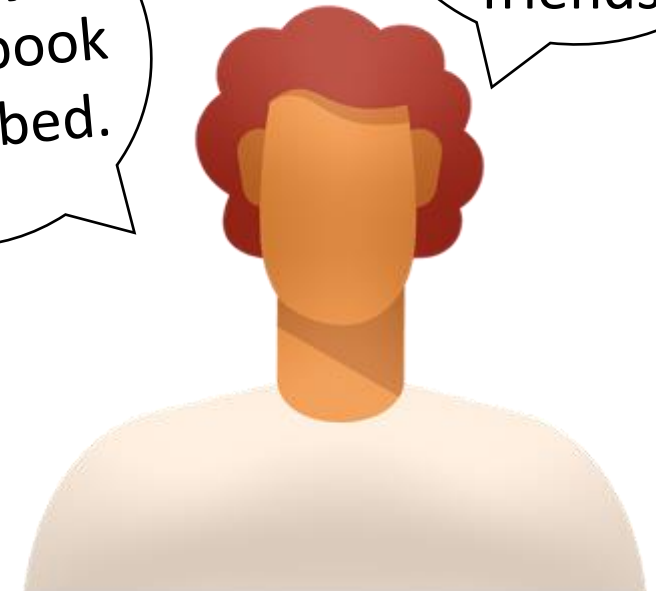
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12:00 pm	I ate lunch.	7:45 pm	I played outside with my sister.
12:20 pm	I went to English class and science class.	8:30 pm	I took a bath.
3:00 pm	I left school.	9:00 pm	I read my book and then went to sleep.

I wake up at 7:00 am **every day**.

I **always** read a book before bed.

I **often** play soccer with my friends.



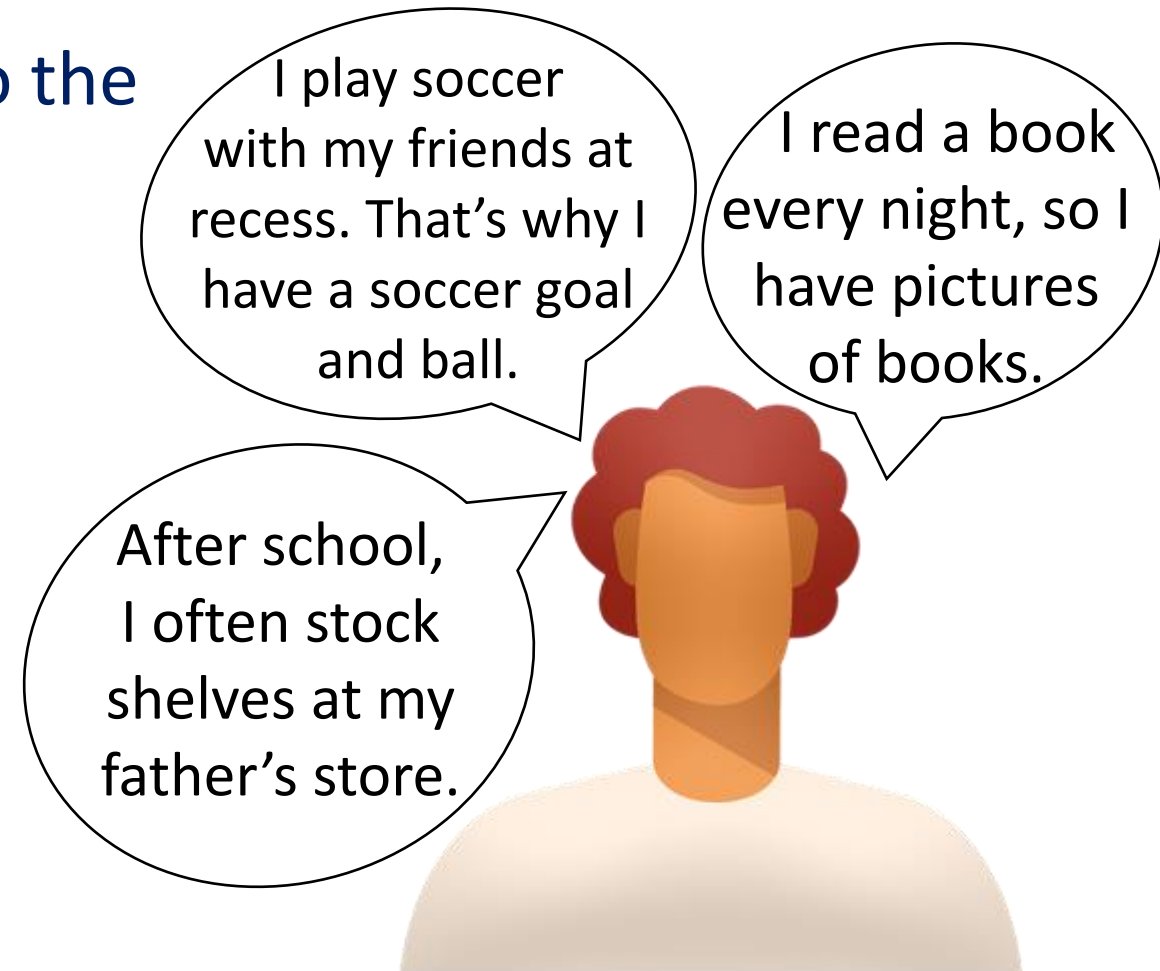
Identifying Routine Activities

Instructions:

5. Students build a diorama showing their daily routine.

6. Students present their dioramas to the class using simple present tense.

Assessment: focus on students' correct use of language to express routine activities.



Virtual Adaptation

Instructions:

1. Students build a diorama showing their daily routine.
 - Art adaptations: collage, drawing
2. Students show their diorama and present their daily routines.
 - During live synchronous class.
 - Students take a picture of their diorama and send voice recordings to the teacher. The teacher posts them on the class page for classmates to review.
 - Students take a picture of their diorama and send written presentation to the teacher.

Making Inferences

Use dioramas to have students practice making inferences and using the simple present tense.

1. Place dioramas around the classroom.
2. Explain that inferences are guesses you make based on observations and background knowledge. Demonstrate how to make inferences.

Example: *I see a guitar in this diorama, so I think this person plays the guitar.*

3. Randomly assign each student to a diorama.
4. Have students make inferences and then present them to the class.



Inference Notes

Observation	Inference



**What
inferences
can you make
about the
person who
made this
diorama?**



Virtual Adaptation

Instructions:

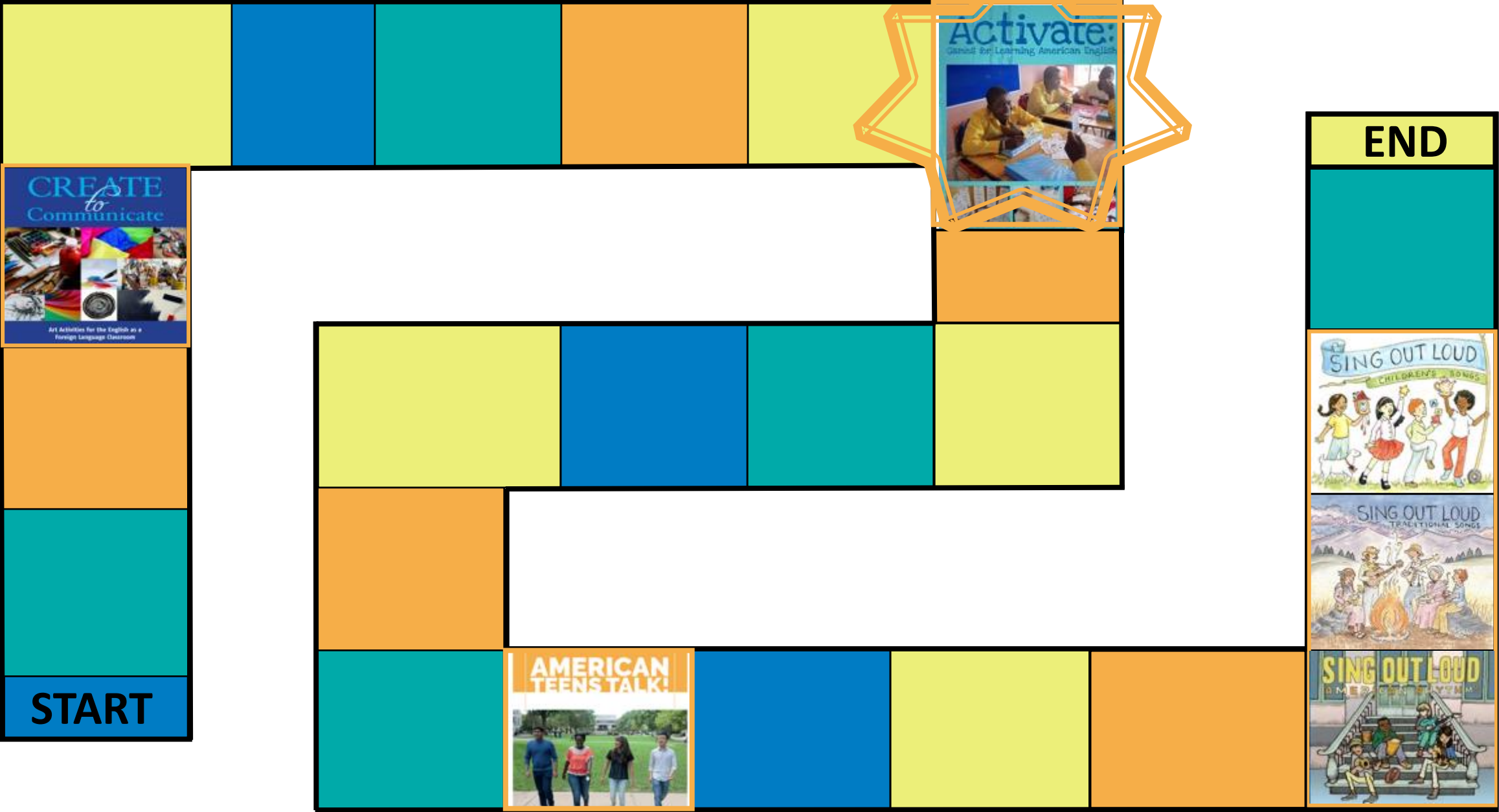
1. Students make a diorama and send a picture to the teacher.
2. Explain what an inference is and demonstrate how to make inferences.
3. Post anonymous pictures of all dioramas on class page or send each student a picture of one of a classmate's diorama.
4. Students make inferences using the Inference Notes handout.

Assessment: focus on students' correct language use and the observations students made to support their inferences.

How else could you use dioramas in your classroom?



Webinar Plan



Activate:

Games for Learning American English



Activate: Games for Learning American English

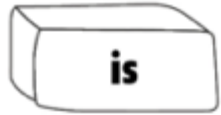
- 11 board games
- 14 'Picture This' games
- 8 'Guess What' games
- 10 'Word Brick' games
- DIY game materials



Word Bricks

- 140 Word Bricks provided
- English words written on both sides

Word Brick Types



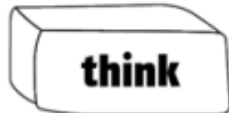
To Be verb forms



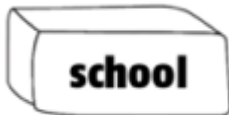
Regular Verbs



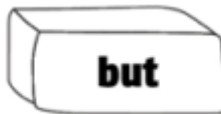
Do, Modals, Auxiliaries



Irregular Verbs



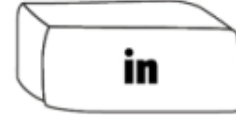
Nouns



Conjunctions



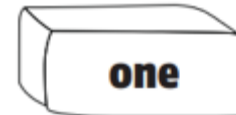
Pronoun Forms



Prepositions



Time and Place Adverbials



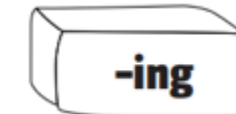
Numbers



Determiners



Adjectives



Special bricks

DIY Word Bricks



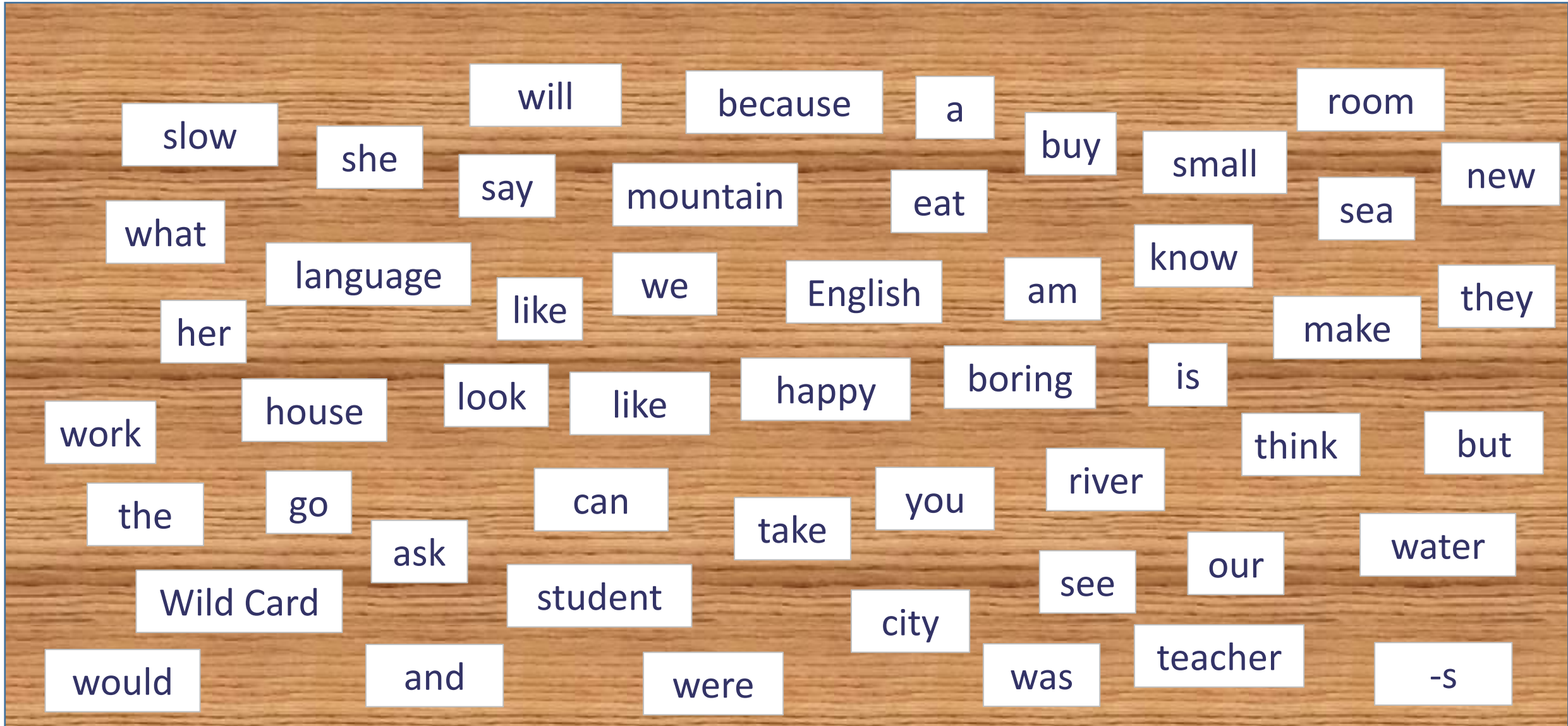
Sorting Race

Students race to find all bricks of a certain type.

Instructions:

1. Have students sit in pairs or small groups and give each team the same number of Word Bricks.
2. Give teams 3 minutes to find as many words in their set of Word Bricks from the selected category.
3. Call out the word category and start the timer.
4. After 3 minutes, have each team read the words they found.

Sorting Race



Sorting Race

language

mountain

room

sea

English

house

river

water

student

city

teacher

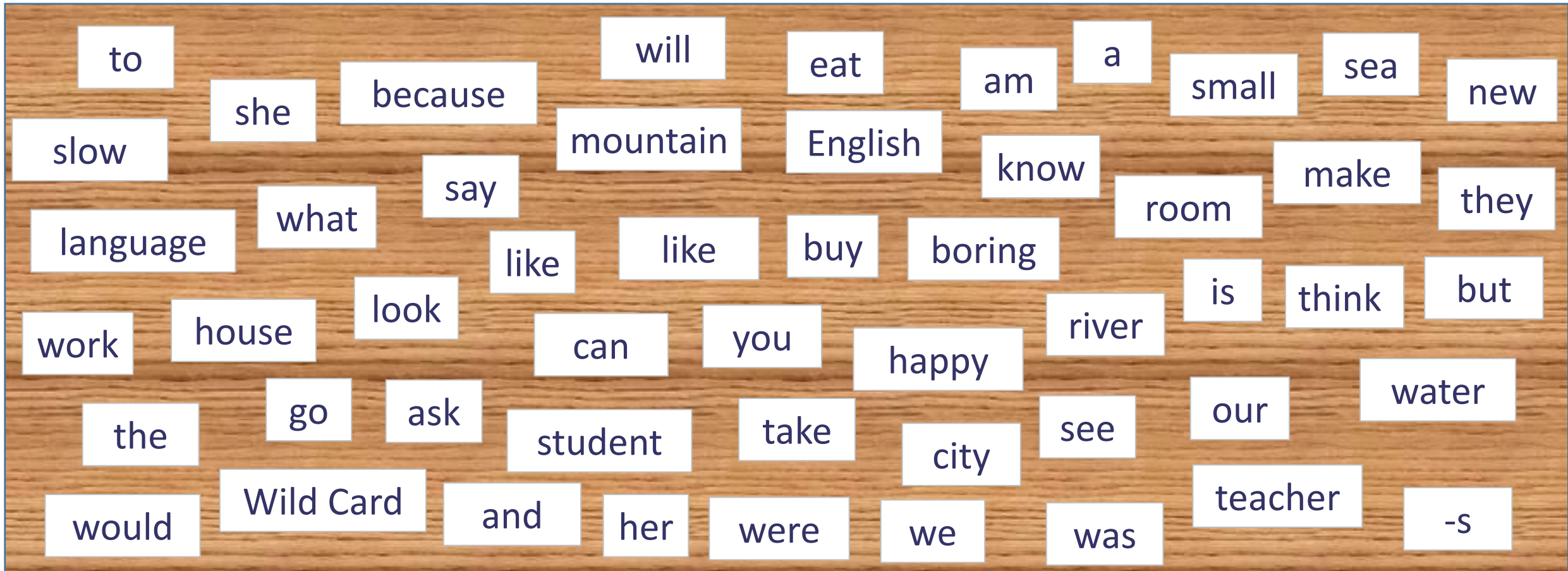
Longest Sentence Challenge

Students compete to create the longest grammatically correct sentence.

Instructions:

1. Students work individually or in pairs or small groups. Give each team the same number of Word Bricks.
2. Teams have 2 minutes to make the longest sentence possible. Students can only use each Word Brick once.
3. After 2 minutes, teams compare their sentences. Teams can challenge other teams if they think their sentence is not grammatically correct.
4. The team with the longest grammatically correct sentence wins.

You ask our new English teacher what makes her happy.



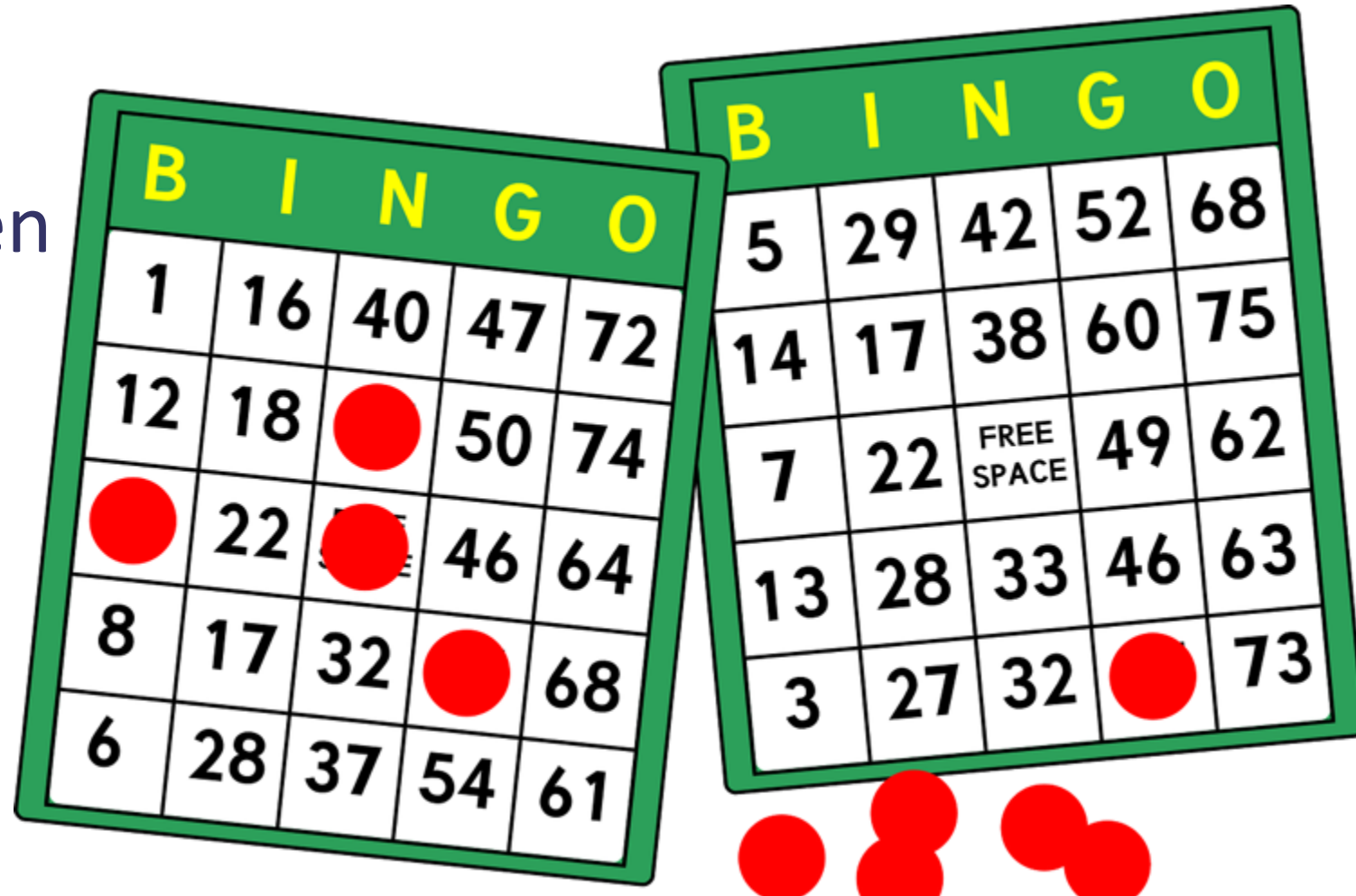
Virtual Adaptation

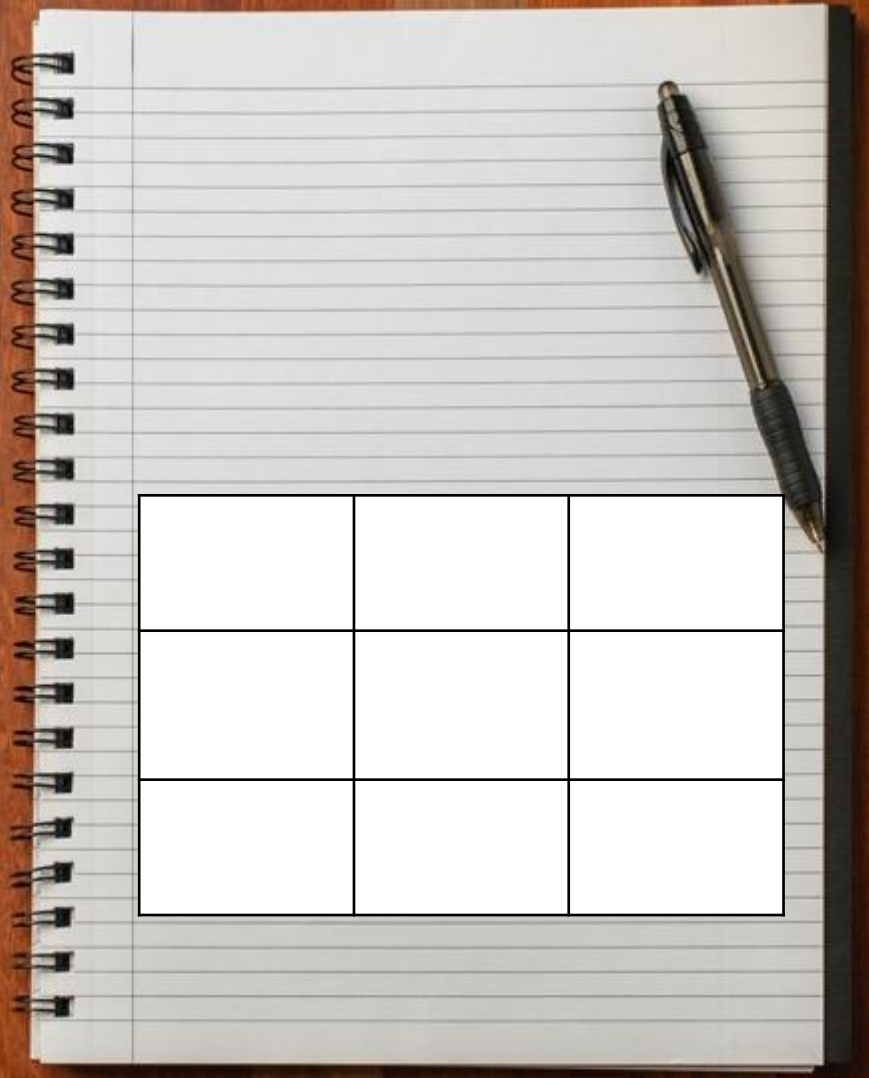
Instructions:

1. Select about 50 Word Bricks. Post an image or list of the selected Word Bricks to the class page.
2. Students have 2 minutes to make the longest sentence possible. Each Word Brick can only be used once.
3. Students post their sentence as a comment or on a discussion board.
4. After 2 minutes, students review other comments and challenge other sentences they think are not grammatically correct.
5. The student with the longest grammatically correct sentence wins.

Word Brick Bingo

- Fun game for making connections between the spoken and written forms of words.
- Great for all ages.





do

on

the

have

up

down

cat

out

in

Word Brick Bingo

Instructions:

1. Have students draw a 3 x 3 grid. This will be their Bingo chart.
2. Put one Word Brick in each square until the Bingo card is full. Each word can only be used one time.

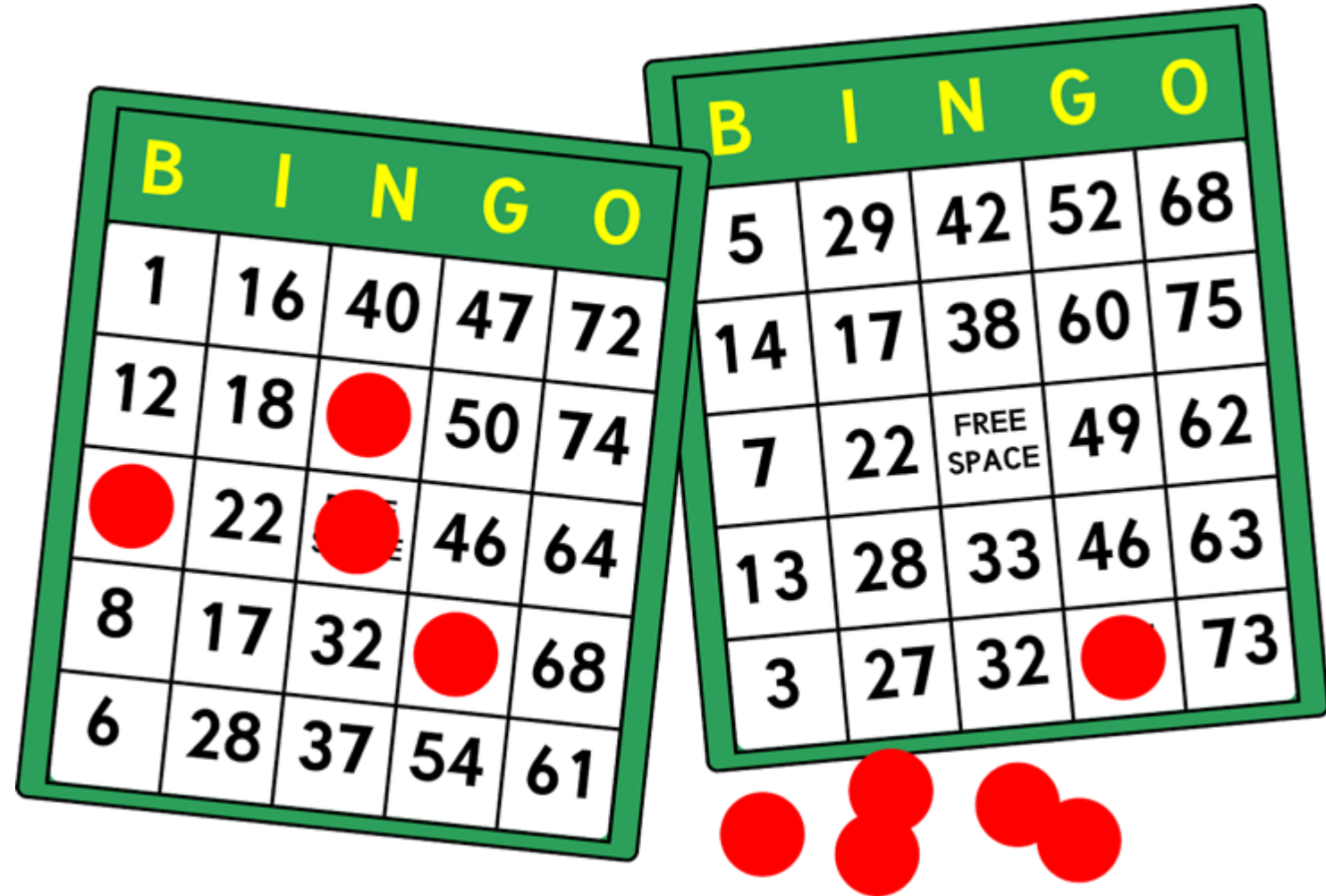
Word Brick Bingo

Instructions:

3. Explain the game's instructions and objective. The first student to get a line of three marked squares should shout "BINGO!"
4. Call out words, one at a time, at random. Mark each word as you call it out so you will remember that it has been used. Students mark each word when they hear it called out.
5. Continue calling out words until someone gets BINGO.







Lets play!

✓ have ✓
✓ cat in out
✓ on up down ✓
✓ do the ✓



Word Brick Bingo

6. Check the student's Bingo card to make sure they have marked only the correct words.

the 	cat 	in
out	up	down 
on 	have 	do 

What are some benefits of using Word Bricks?



Word Brick Benefits

- Students learn through exploration and play
- Many different games possible with the same set of materials
- Highly adaptable
 - Can be used to focus on a variety of grammar points
 - Great for differentiating instruction and multi-level classes
 - Easily expand collection to add constructions or vocabulary

Webinar Plan



AMERICAN TEENS TALK!



American Teens Talk!

- 30 interviews and transcripts
- Authentic speech and a variety of accents
- Ideas for possible listening, reading, speaking, and writing activities

Listening Activities

- Bottom-up listening
 - Listen and answer comprehension questions
 - *What instrument does Amy play?*
 - *How is Amy celebrating her birthday?*
- Top-down listening
 - Listen, focus on the main topics, and analyze
 - *What do you learn about the interests and personality of this person?*
 - *After listening to this interview, what is something that you would like to ask this young person?*

Authentic Speech

We haven't been doing a lot at school because it is right before the break, so we don't do a lot. They try to squish in a lot of tests during the week before we get out so we can start a new unit after the break. So

I had a math test and a science test. In orchestra we've been learning new notes, how to read them and how to do them on the instrument.

What other language points can you teach with this interview?



Listening Cloze Info-Gap Activity

Instructions:

1. Turn the transcript into two different cloze exercises, ensuring different words are deleted in each handout.

We haven't been doing a lot at school because it is right before the break, so we don't do a lot. They try to squish in a lot of tests during the week before we get out so we can start a new unit after the break. So I had a math test and a science test. In orchestra we've been learning new notes, how to read them and how to do them on the instrument.

Listening Cloze Info-Gap Activity

VERSION A

We haven't been doing a lot _____
school because it is right _____ the
break, so we _____ do a lot. They _____
to squish in a _____ of tests during the
_____ before we get out _____ we can
start a _____ unit after the break. _____
I had a math _____ and a science test.
_____ orchestra we've been learning
_____ notes, how to read _____ and
how to do _____ on the instrument.

VERSION B

We haven't been _____ a lot at
school _____ it is right before the
_____, so we don't do a _____. They try
to squish _____ a lot of tests _____ the
week before we get _____ so we can
_____ a new unit _____ the break. So
I _____ a math test and a _____ test.
In orchestra _____ been learning
new _____, how to read them _____
how to do them _____ the instrument.

Listening Cloze Info-Gap Activity

Instructions:

2. Distribute the handouts to students, alternating between giving Version A and Version B.
3. Students read the transcript and write the guess of the missing words.
4. Play the recording two times. As they listen, students write the missing words on their handout.
5. Students partner up with a classmate with the other version and check each other's work.

Post-Listening Activity: Interview Classmates

Instructions:

1. Teach or review reported speech.

Example: *Amy said that she had a math test and a science test this week.*

2. Listen to the interview once, then provide the transcript and listen again.
3. Model using reported speech using the interview you just played.

Post-Listening Activity: Interview Classmates

Instructions:

4. Have students create interview questions. Provide guidance as necessary.
5. Students interview a classmate, taking notes during the interview to record their partner's answers.
6. Students present their findings using reported speech.

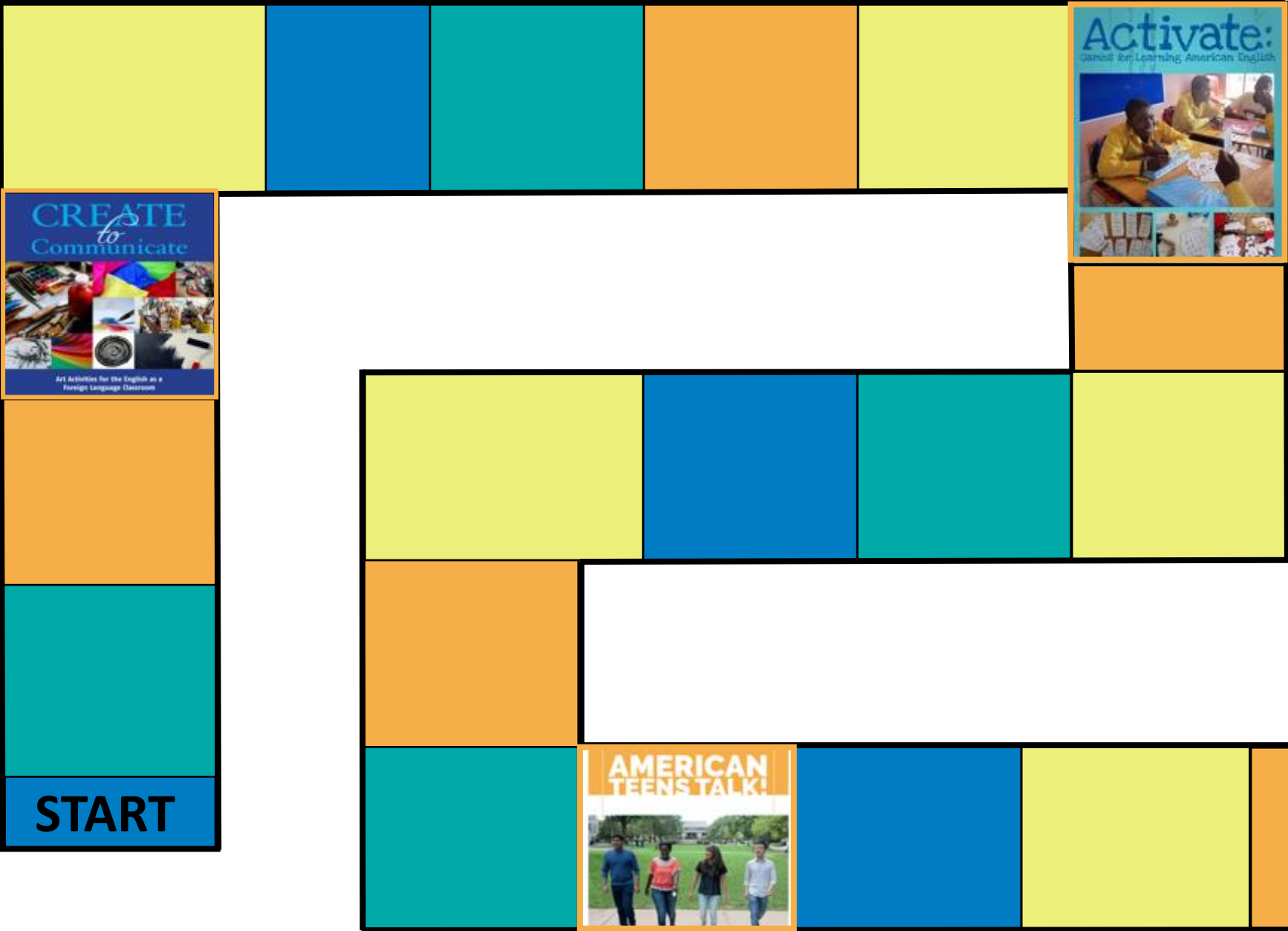
Feedback should focus on students' correct use of reported speech.

Virtual Adaptation

Instructions:

1. Post the audio recording and transcript. Students should listen to the audio once, then listen again while looking at the transcript.
2. Students interview a classmate, taking notes during the interview to record their partner's answers.
 - Breakout rooms, phone call, voice memos, text messages
3. Students present their findings using reported speech.

Webinar Plan





Sing Out Loud

- 3 albums:
 - *Children's Songs*
 - *Traditional Songs*
 - *American Rhythms*
- 47 total songs and song lyrics
- Activity ideas for before, during, and after listening

Listening: Gap Fill

Instructions:

1. Create a gap-fill activity using the song lyrics.
2. Play the song and have students write the missing words.
3. After listening several times, have students compare answers with a partner.
4. Discuss any questions or challenges as a class, then play the song again so students can follow along with the correct lyrics.

What words fill in the gaps?



1. Put your right hand in, take your right hand out. Put your right hand in, and you shake it all about. Do the Hokey Pokey and you turn yourself around, that's what it's all about!
2. Put your whole self in, take your whole self out. Put your whole self in, and you shake it all about. Do the Hokey and Pokey and you turn yourself around, that's what it's all about!

Virtual Adaptation

Instructions:

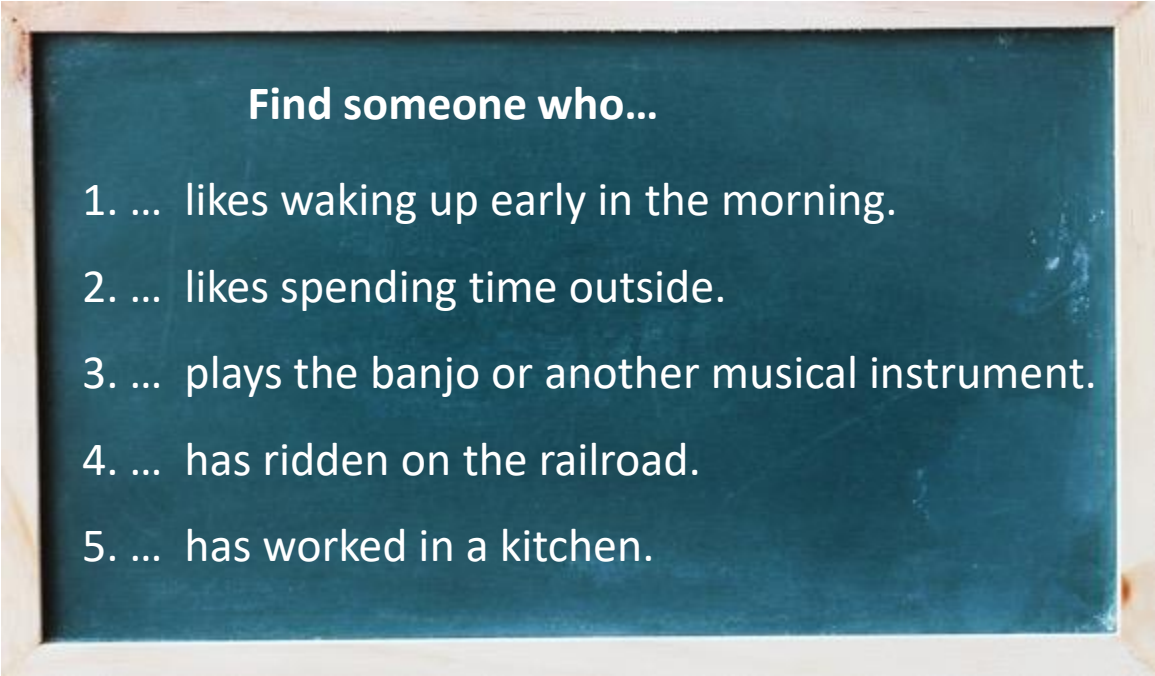
1. Create a gap-fill activity using the song lyrics and send to students.
2. Post the song on the class page. As students listen, they should fill in the missing words.
3. After listening several times, review the answers as a class, then play the song one more time so everyone can follow along with the correct lyrics.

Pre-listening Activity: Find Someone Who

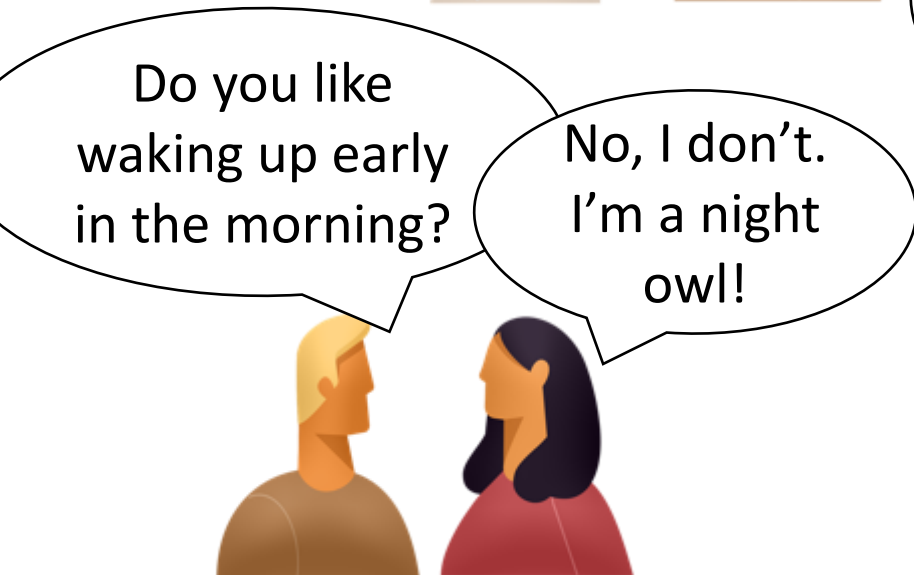
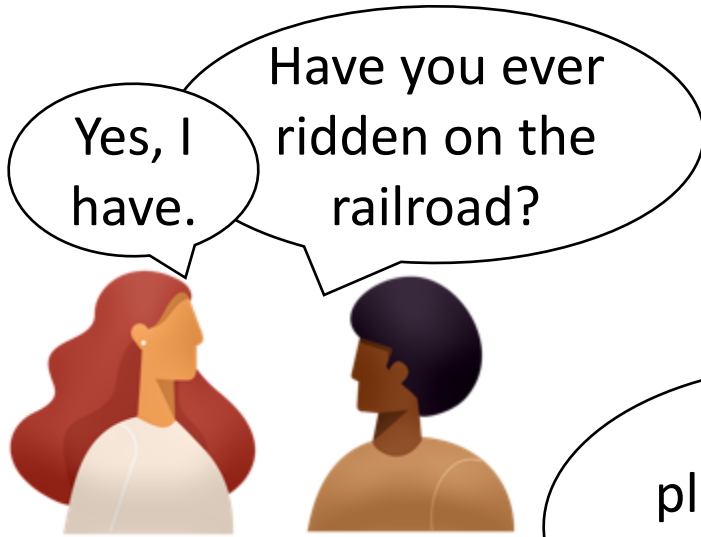
Instructions:

1. Show the list of questions and explain any new vocabulary.
2. Explain the instructions:
 - Students will ask each other these questions.
 - For each question, they find one person who can answer yes and write their name next to the question.
 - Students cannot use the same person to answer more than one question.

Find someone who...	Classmate's Name
1. ... likes waking up early in the morning.	_____
2. ... likes spending time outside.	_____
3. ... plays the banjo or another musical instrument.	_____
4. ... has ridden on the railroad.	_____
5. ... has worked in a kitchen.	_____



Step 3: Ask Classmates Questions



After the Activity

1. Review the list of questions and have students share who answered 'yes' to certain questions.
2. Address any questions or common errors you heard during the activity.
3. Play the song and instruct students to circle all the words in the questions that they hear in the song.

After the Activity

I've been working on the railroad. All the live long day. I've been working on the railroad, just to pass the time away. Can't you hear the whistle blowing? Rise up so early in the morn! Can't you hear the captain shouting? Dinah, blow your horn! Dinah, won't you blow, Dinah, won't you blow, Dinah won't you blow your horn? Dinah, won't you blow, Dinah, won't you blow, Dinah won't you blow your horn? Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah, someone's in the kitchen, I know! Someone's in the kitchen with Dinah, strumming on the old banjo. Fee fi fiddley aye, oh! Fee fi fiddley aye, oh- Fee fi fiddley aye, oh! Strumming the old ban-jo!

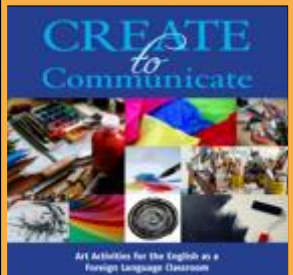
How would you adapt this activity for your students?



Possible Adaptations

- Provide keywords from the song and have students create the questions they ask.
- Provide pictures that represent the key vocabulary items from the song. Teach students two question forms and have students form the questions they ask.
- Create one set of questions using the present perfect and a follow-up question in the past tense.

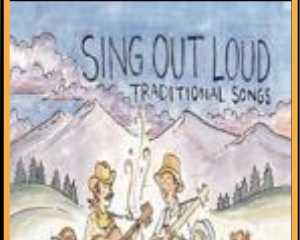
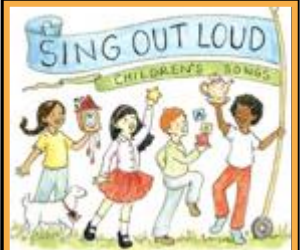
Summary



START



END



**Which of these resources do you think
you will use with your students?**



References

- Activate: Games for Learning American English:
<https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/activate-games-learning-american-english>
- American Teens Talk!: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-teens-talk>
- Create to Communicate Art Activities for the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classroom:
<https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/create-communicate-art-activities-efl-classroom>
- Sing Out Loud - American Rhythms: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-rhythms>
- Sing Out Loud - Children's Songs:
<https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/sing-out-loud-childrens-songs>
- Sing Out Loud - Traditional Songs:
<https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/sing-out-loud-traditional-songs>
- Zúñiga Vargas, J. P. (2015). [Listening Cloze Meets Info-Gap: A Hybrid Activity to Exploit Listening Materials](#). *English Teaching Forum*, 53(4), p. 24-32.

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Reflection Questions

1. *American Teens Talk!* includes speakers with a variety of accents. What benefits could your students gain from listening to different accents?
2. The Listening Cloze Info-Gap Activity involves student-led assessment. What are some of the benefits to this approach? What challenges might you face, and how can you address them?
3. How might you incorporate the American English resources shared today to make grammar activities more interesting and engaging?



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